

Message Text

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ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /031 W

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S E C R E T TEL AVIV 9503

EXDIS

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MOPS, IS, XF

SUBJECT: MILITARY BRIEFINGS FOR CODEL STRATTON

1. THE IDF PROVIDED A SERIES OF MILITARY BRIEFINGS ON NOV 18 TO WHICH I ACCOMPANIED CODEL. DATT, ARMA AND EMBOFF ALSO ATTENDED. BRIEFERS WERE CHIEF OF STAFF ELAZAR, DIR OF MILITARY INTELLIGENCE ZEIRA, GOI SPECIAL NEGOTIATOR YARIV, AF CMDR PELED AND NAVY CMDR TELEM.

2. MOST INFORMATION CONTAINED IN BRIEFINGS WAS ALREADY KNOWN TO US AND HAD BEEN REPORTED BY DAO. I WILL INCLUDE HERE ONLY HIGHLIGHTS OF BRIEFINGS.

3. DMI ZEIRA OPENED HIS BRIEFINGS WITH INTERESTING STATEMENT THAT EGYPT AND SYRIA ARE SOVIET SATELLITES WITH ALL PRIVILEGES BUT NO OBLIGATIONS. IN SUPPORT OF THIS THESIS HE POINTED TO THE ADVANCED SOVIET WEAPONS WHICH THE USSR HAD NOT GIVEN NORTH VIETNAM IN HER WAR WITH U.S., BUT HAD PROVIDED EGYPT AND SYRIA IN THEIR FIGHT AGAINST ISRAEL. THESE INCLUDED SAMS (SA-2C, SA-3 AND SA-6), AIRCRAFT (SU-7 AND SU-20), AND MISSILES (KELT, SCUD AND FROG-7).

4. WHEN ASKED HOW ISRAEL VIEWED SADAT'S POST-WAR TURN TO U.S., ZEIRA REPLIED THAT EGYPT KNEW THAT QUOTE MAYBE THE SOVIETS CAN GIVE HER WEAPONS, BUT ONLY AMERICA CAN GIVE HER TERRITORY UNQUOTE.

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5. ONLY OTHER SIGNIFICANT POINT RAISED (AGAIN IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION) WAS THAT AS OF NOV 18, ISRAEL STILL HAD POL RESERVES OF APPROX 120 DAYS.

6. CHIEF OF STAFF ELAZAR'S PITCH WAS PREDICTABLE TO EXTENT THAT HE MINIMIZED IDF MISTAKES IN WAR AND PRESENTED A SHOPPING LIST OF ARMS NEEDS. HE DID GIVE INTERESTING ACCOUNT OF HOURS PRECEDING ARAB ATTACK ON OCT 6. HE STATED THAT FINAL PIECE OF INFO RECEIVED AT 0200Z, OCT 6. NOTE: NEITHER ELAZAR NOR ZEIRA HAVE DISCLOSED WHAT THIS INFO WAS BUT BOTH DESCRIBE IT AS GOOD INFO THAT SYRIA AND EGYPT INTENDED ATTACK AT 1600Z, OCT. 6.

7. AFTER RECEIVING THIS INFO, ELAZAR CALLED AF CMDR PELED AND ASKED WHEN AF COULD BE READY LAUNCH PREEMPTIVE ATTACK. PELED REPLIED AF COULD LAUNCH AT 1100Z AND WAS TOLD BY ELAZAR TO PREPARE TO ATTACK. ELAZAR THEN INITIATED MOBILIZATION AND REQUESTED PERMISSION (FROM MINDEF DAYAN) TO PREMPT AT 1100Z. AFTER CABINET DECISION, REQUEST WAS DISAPPROVED. (ELAZAR STILL CAN NEITHER UNDERSTAND NOR APPROVE GOI DECISION. HE AND ALL OTHER IDF OFFICERS WITH WHOM WE HAVE SPOKEN ARE STILL EXTREMELY BITTER OVER GOI DECISION. ELAZAR FEELS STRONGLY THAT PREEMPTIVE ATTACK WOULD HAVE HAD IMPORTANT, BUT NOT DECISIVE, INFLUENCE.)

8. AF CMDR MG PELED'S BRIEFING CONTAINED ONE SURPRISING HIGHLIGHT. DESPITE HIS EARLIER GRAVE CONCERN OVER IMMEDIATE NEED FOR SOME MEANS OF COUNTERING SA-6 THREAT, HE STATED IN THIS BRIEFING THAT PEOPLE HAD OVER-DRAMATIZED IMPORTANCE OF SA-6 AND SA-7 THREATS. HE PRODUCED FIGURES TO PROVE SA-6 AND SA-7 CLAIMED ONLY 20 PERCENT OF TOTAL IAF LOSSES.

9. THE SUBSTANCE OF CEASEFIRE NEGOTIATOR YARIV'S BRIEFING HAS BEEN REPORTED SEPTEL. NAVY CMDR TELEM'S BRIEFING ON IDF NAVY WAS LIMITED, BECAUSE OF LATE HOUR, TO RECITAL OF IDF OPERATIONS DURING WAR, ALL OF WHICH HAD BEEN PREVIOUSLY REPORTED BY NAVAL ATTACHE.

10. FORMER CHIEF OF STAFF ZVI ZUR (NOW ASST MINDEF) SUMMARIZED BRIEFINGS AND MADE STRONG PITCH FOR ISRAEL'S NEED FOR IMMEDIATE RESUPPLY OF TRUCKS. HE STATED THE IDF ABSORBED ONLY 25 PERCENT OF LABOR FORCE, BUT 80 PERCENT OF COUNTRY'S TRUCKS STILL MOBILIZED.

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